

**WASHINGTON METRORAIL SAFETY COMMISSION**

**Date:** Tuesday, December 10, 2024

**Location:** This meeting was conducted as a publicly streamed video conference. The video recording of the meeting is available at [December 10, 2024 Meeting Recording on YouTube](#). Commissioner questions and comments are captured in the video recording.

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**MINUTES**

<b>Order of Events</b>	<b>Items</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	Commissioners present: Chair Christopher Hart, Vice Chair Robert Lauby, Secretary-Treasurer Debra Farrar-Dyke, and Commissioners Rouse, Conklin, Higgins and Robinson. Commissioners Higgins and Robinson were non-voting members.
1.	<b>Call to Order.</b> Hart.  Hart called the meeting to order at 12:34 p.m. WMSC General Counsel Silbaugh called the roll, and a quorum was achieved.
2.	<b>Safety Message.</b> Darrell Braxton, Program Specialist, Operations.  Braxton highlighted some of the safety challenges in cold weather. Preparation lessens confusion during a winter weather event. Preparation should include a winter emergency response plan with emergency contact numbers, knowing the evacuation and shelter-in-place protocols, and stocking essential supplies.
3.	<b>Approval of the minutes of the October 22, 2024 Public Meeting.</b> Hart.  Farrar-Dyke sought comments on the proposed minutes. Hearing none, she moved for approval of the minutes of the October 22, 2024 Public Meeting. The minutes of the October 22, 2024 Public Meeting were approved unanimously.
4.	<b>Public Comments.</b> Hart.  Hart invited comments from members of the public who had joined the webinar audience and who identified themselves as speakers. No members of the public offered comments. Chair Hart also reminded viewers that comments may be provided to the WMSC website, through social media, or by email.

<p>5.</p>	<p><b>Chair’s Remarks.</b> Hart.</p> <p>Hart first welcomed Tiffany Robinson as the Alternate Commissioner for the Commonwealth of Virginia. Ms. Robinson is the Director for the Virginia Department of Rail and serves as the chair of the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority board. He forecast that staff would be reporting on safety oversight activities that ensure Metrorail maintains its commitment to continuously improve the safety of the system. He also informed the Commissioners that they will consider and vote on two resolutions. The first is to review WMATA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, which it must revise annually, and the second is a review and vote on the adoption of the WMSC Fiscal Year 2024 Independent Financial Audit.</p>
<p>6.</p>	<p><b>CEO’s Remarks.</b> David Mayer, Chief Executive Officer.</p> <p>Mayer provided updates on key items of the WMSC’s work. First, as he has at each meeting since springtime, Mayer again reported on the status of the subpoena issued on April 8, seeking production of documents in support of the Fitness for Duty and Occupational Health Programs Audit. He shared that because WMATA continues its refusal to provide occupational health-related documents, on October 31, 2024, the WMSC filed a petition in the U.S. District Court in the District of Columbia seeking an order compelling Metrorail to comply with the subpoena. WMATA filed an answer on November 25, 2024. Worker safety and occupational health are identified in WMATA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, and the WMSC is obligated to oversee the safety elements within that Plan. Next, Mayer reported on the interactions with WMATA about the WMSC’s issuance of an order addressing the pace of changes to Metrorail’s Roadway Worker Protection program. The intended goal is to create an annual predictable revision cycle. On October 11, Metrorail submitted a petition for reconsideration of the RWP Order. As provided in the WMSC’s Program Standard Section 11, Mayer responded with a denial of this petition for reconsideration on October 25, 2024. WMATA subsequently submitted a petition for reconsideration to the WMSC Commissioners, and the Commissioners will respond no later than December 16, 2024. Last, he highlighted the continued work on automatic train operations and that after completing its in-depth review, the WMSC concurred that Metrorail may implement automatic train operations and return to design speeds on the Red Line. The WMSC will continue its in-depth review of the safety certification for the remainder of the Metrorail lines. Mayer recognized Metrorail’s hard work and collaboration with the WMSC to reach this milestone.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p><b>Audits.</b> Davis Rajtik, Deputy Chief Operations Officer and Director, Audits and Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>Rajtik reiterated Mayer’s report that the deadline for the production of documents has passed but the WMSC has not received the majority of the documents needed to begin the Fitness for Duty and Occupational Health Programs Audit. Thus, the WMSC is not able to begin its targeted assessment of compliance with worker safety standards. For ongoing audits, following the exit conference for the Emergency Management and Fire Life Safety Program audit, Metrorail made</p>

	<p>three productions of additional documents. The WMSC is incorporating the relevant information into the draft audit report and plans to provide the draft to WMATA in December. WMATA has 30 days to review and provide comments. In October and November, the WMSC conducted approximately 60 interviews and on-site observations for the Control Center and Rail Operations audit. WMATA also provided additional documents for this audit. The exit conference for this audit is planned for January 2025. Last, the WMSC sent its notification letter and initial document requests on November 5 for the Elevators and Escalators audit. The responses will be reviewed in December and January and interviews and observations will begin in 2025.</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p><b>Corrective Action Plans (CAPs).</b> Ashley Rhodes, Program Manager for Corrective Action Plans.</p> <p>Rhodes reported that three CAPs have been closed since the October 22 public meeting. There are 92 open CAPs, which include seven CAPs stemming from the Roadway Worker Protection Audit, and six more CAPs are in development based upon that audit. Metrorail has submitted 45 new deliverables for the open CAPs between the October and December meetings. Rhodes explained the three closed CAPs: CAP C-0121 developed from a finding in the 2021 Fitness for Duty Audit that there was not “...adequate access to, documentation of, or compilation of data for WMATA to assess compliance with its hours of service requirements.” Metrorail created a fatigue Management Program and a related compliance monitoring system that utilizes data in existing timekeeping systems. Next, CAP C-0237 developed from a finding in the 2022 Internal Safety Review Program Audit, which found that Metrorail had not conducted an audit of its triennial internal safety review of its safety review program, which is required by the WMSC Program Standard. Metrorail revised its procedures and schedule to include an audit of its safety review program, which will be performed by a qualified third party. Last, C—0246 stems from a recommendation in the 2023 Audit of Metrorail’s Roadway Maintenance Machines Program to document and formalize a process for starting and checking equipment that is not used regularly. Metrorail created a standard operating procedure for long-term storage of Roadway Maintenance Machines.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p><b>Safety Certification Status Report.</b> Paul Smith, Director, System Engineering.</p> <p>Smith described the philosophy of the safety certification program at Metrorail, which is to comprehensively identify hazards and evaluate the probability and severity of each hazard, and to mitigate those hazards based on Metrorail’s safety risk assessment methodology. Safety certification is performed during the design, construction, testing and commissioning phases of a project. The WMSC conducts oversight of WMATA’s safety certification program, verifying that WMATA adheres to the certification steps it plans. The WMSC also designates projects undergoing safety certification for in-depth review, which means that the project cannot be placed in revenue service until the WMSC concurs that Metrorail completed the safety certification requirements for that project. Smith described the nearly five years of the in-depth review of Metrorail’s use of automatic train operations, and more recently, the change to the maximum allowable speed. On December 9, 2024, the WMSC concurred on the use of both on the Red Line in revenue service. Activating ATO operations means that Metrorail trains on the Red Line, with knowledgeable and qualified train operators on board, rely on the fail-safe automated train protection system to accelerate, decelerate, brake and stop, with proper train separation. When encountering roadway workers, train operators will continue to be briefed by an advanced flagger. The advanced flagger</p>

	<p>will be positioned at the 8-car marker of a station platform, in advance of the roadway workers, to alert the train operators of personnel ahead and to direct train operators to switch the train operations to manual mode until they pass the roadway workers. Metrorail has completed its Safety Certification work for the Return to Design Speed for the entirety of the system, not just the Red Line. However, through a temporary order, speeds on the remaining lines will continue to be enforced at 59MPH, until Metrorail demonstrates it has completed safety certification to receive WMSC’s concurrence for operating at design speeds on the remaining part of the system. Work remains to be completed on Metrorail’s safety certification for Automatic Train Operations for the remaining lines.</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p><b>Safety Event Investigations.</b> Adam Quigley, Manager, Safety Investigations and Natalie Quiroz, Investigations Analyst.</p> <p>The WMSC investigations team has been investigating several significant incidents, including an automatic train protection cutout event at Addison Road Station that occurred on November 11, 2024. During this incident, a Car Maintenance Mechanic improperly sealed the Automatic Train Protection switch in the cutout position. A Rail Vehicle Operator identified the issue after departing Downtown Largo Station. The train was promptly offloaded and transported to Alexandria Yard without any reported injuries or damages. Another noteworthy event occurred at Glenmont Station on Saturday, November 30, 2024 involving an automatic signal error. The system routed a train toward a platform that was already occupied by another train. Fortunately, the Glenmont terminal supervisor intervened in time to stop the train from proceeding onto the occupied track. Metrorail is investigating the root cause of this anomaly, focusing on why the automatic signal system directed the train to the occupied platform rather than the open one.</p> <p>The reports referenced below may be found at the following link:  <a href="https://wmsc.gov/oversight/reports/">https://wmsc.gov/oversight/reports/</a>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. W-0341 Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Farragut West Station – October 14, 2023</li> <li>2. W-0342 Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Dupont Circle – December 18, 2023</li> <li>3. W-0343 Evacuation for Life Safety Reasons at Stadium-Armory Station – February 19, 2024</li> <li>4. W-0350 Improper Roadway Worker Protection at Benning Road Station – April 27, 2024</li> <li>5. W-0351 Red Signal Overrun near Brentwood Rail Yard – April 11, 2024</li> <li>6. W-0352 Red Signal Overrun near Anacostia Station – April 19, 2024</li> <li>7. W-0353 Derailment near Stadium-Armory Station – December 16, 2023</li> <li>8. W-0354 Serious Injury – College Park Station – April 28, 2024</li> </ol> <p>Commissioners moved to adopt the eight reports. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
<p>11.</p>	<p><b>Resolutions and Other Actions.</b> Hart; Kyle Ange, Chief Financial Officer; and David Mayer, CEO.</p> <p>The Commissioners considered two resolutions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Resolution R-2024-09: Following a review by the Finance Committee, the Commissioners reviewed and considered the annual independent financial audit for WMSC Fiscal Year</li> </ol>

	<p>2024. All Commissioners met with the auditors on December 10, 2024, and the audit includes an unmodified, or “clean” opinion on the WMSC’s financial statements through the fiscal year that ended June 2024. This annual audit is required by the WMSC Compact, and, upon adoption, will be transmitted by staff as required by the Compact.</p> <p>Conklin moved for the approval of Resolution R-2024-09, adopting SB &amp; Company, LLC’s fiscal year 2024 independent audit of the WMSC. The motion passed unanimously.</p> <p>2. Resolution R-2024-10: The Commissioners reviewed and considered the draft of WMATA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP, December 31, 2024 version) to ensure it complies with 49 C.F.R. part 673, 49 U.S.C. § 5329, and the WMSC Program Standard (Rev. 7.1). Mayer discussed the purpose of the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan and the WMSC’s assessment process.</p> <p>Farrar-Dyke moved for the approval of Resolution R-2024-10, approving WMATA’s Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, effective December 31, 2024. The motion passed unanimously.</p>
12.	<p><b>Adjournment.</b> Hart adjourned the meeting at 2:28 p.m.</p>